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Next issue Fri 23rd November  
Deadline 10am, Thur 22nd Nov.

THURSDAY 22ND NOVEMBER 2001

COMING

René Girard:  
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OF IMITATION

Billy Hewitt, S. J.

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The teenage search for sex continues  
LEGALLY BLONDE(12)  
Daily: 11.45, 2.00, 4.30, 6.45, 9.45  
Reese Witherspoon becomes unlikely law student  
AMERICA'S SWEETHEARTS (12) Daily: 1.30, 4.15  
Romantic comedy  
THE OTHERS(15)  
Daily: 12.30, 3.00, 6.00, 7.00, 8.30, 9.30  
Nicole Kidman gets spooked

Ultimate Picture Palace 245288  
AMERICAN DESI(12)  
Thrur: 6.00  
College freshman comes to terms with his Indian-American heritage  
AMELIE(15)  
Thrur: 8.00  
A young French girl has the power to change other people's lives  
RING(15)  
Thrur: 10.30pm  
Mysterious video kills its viewers  
RESERVOIR DOGS(18)  
Thrur: 10.20pm  
Tarantino's gangster thriller

Phoenix Picture House 512526  
GHOST WORLD(15) Daily: 1.50, 4.10, 6.30, 9.00  
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THE MAN WHO WASN'T THERE(15)  
Thrur: 1.45, 9.15  
Coen brothers' latest  
LITTLE OTIK (15)  
Thrur: 4.00  
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I AM ARE YOU  
Thrur: 7.00  
Part of the Jewish Film Festival  
TIME BANDITS(PG)  
Thrur: 11.30pm  
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SW9(15)  
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REVIEW: THEATRE

THE VIRTUOUS BURGLAR

Burton-Taylor Theatre, to Sat 24th

It was one of those performances where the cast practically outnumbered the audience, which is a shame because the play itself was highly enjoyable and the performances impressive.

The story was not simple, neither was it original - a typical relationship farce in which the three married couples are paired in almost every possible permutation during the course of the play, with the highest possible degree of misunderstanding between them. But the confusion was depicted very convincingly by the actors with some very nice comedy touches in the performances, and there was genuine amusement at each twist and turn in the story.

Most of the actors betrayed nerves at some point in the play - fluffing the occasional word - but this is only to be expected on a first performance and it is in no way detracted from the enjoyment of the performance. They were all evidently talented actors with definite potential. The husband (one of the better performances) reminded me of Hugh Laurie - a bumbling "well-bred" panicky character who was increasingly unable to manage the intricate web of lies that he was creating in order to hide his affair from his wife. His mistress (another very good performance) really came into her own when she discovered that the burglar was indeed a burglar and she found this somehow arousing (the actress was disturbingly convincing at this point). The burglar, too, certainly had character which was evident from the first moments of the play, when purely visually he frantically portrayed the tortuous dilemma of whether or not to answer the phone in the house he was burgling.

The fact that the theatre was so small was disappointing at first, but the advantages of such a venue soon became clear. The action was taking place so close to me that I could literally have reached out and touched the actors if I had wanted, so it had an immediacy that is impossible in most theatres.

Overall then, a very enjoyable evening which reinforced my determination to support this sort of small-scale production in Oxford. As well as being good fun, where else can the actors of the future cut their teeth?

Guy Shahar 20/11/01

THEATRE

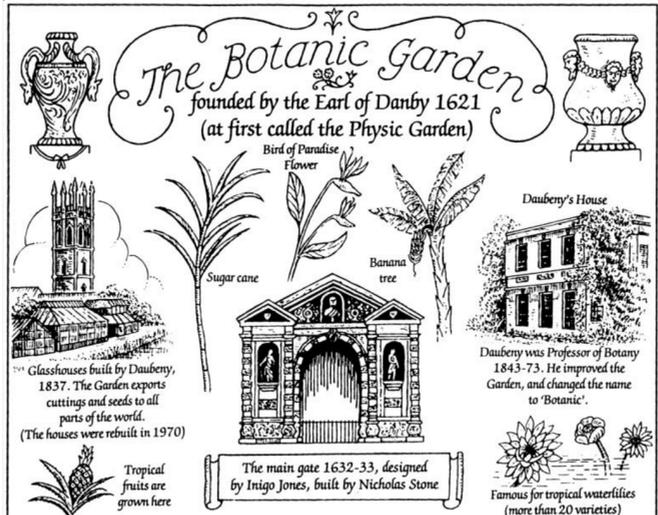
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Sat Mat: 2.30  
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Old Fire Station 794490  
DRACULA Tue 20th - Sat 24th: 7.30; Sat Mat: 2.30  
Bram Stoker's classic adapted for the stage  
Burton Taylor 793797  
GASPING Tue 20th - Sat 24th: 7.30  
By Ben Elton  
THE VIRTUOUS BURGLAR Tue 20th - Sat 24th: 9.30  
Satirical look at modern society  
Moser Theatre  
DAISY PULLS IT OFF Tue 20th - Sat 24th: 7.30  
By Denise Deegan

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3. He was a powerfully built man, who late in life sported a beard of such length that one day a madman grabbed hold of it and cried out that Bobart had eaten his horse, and its tail was hanging out of his mouth.  
4. Bobart was succeeded by his son, who became Professor of Botany. Around 1700, the Younger Bobart discovered a rat in the garden, and by cosmetic surgery turned it into so convincing a dragon that great excitement was caused in the academic world. The hoaxer eventually confessed, but the 'dragon' was considered such a masterpiece that it was kept on display in the School of Anatomy.

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REVIEW: THEATRE

GASPING

by Ben Elton

Burton-Taylor Theatre, to Sat 24th

When the topics of business and morality are taken up in the same context, responses tend to sway towards the cynical. The perception is that people's general opinion of business and greed is that they stereotypically go hand in hand. Ben Elton took this generalization and produced a script for a satirical theatrical performance on the very concept: corporate greed and those who go along with them. "Gasping" shows the cut-throat and selfish side of corporate business complemented by the yuppie lifestyle, in perfect satirical form.

Sir Chiffley Lockheart owns Lockheart Holdings, a London firm that thrives on the business of making massive amounts of money. Phillip and Sandy are top associates of his, who find themselves in a pressing discussion on the development of an "exciting" new product that will make money in a market that does not presently exist. After extensive research, Phillip comes up with a way to improve air, and at the same time implements a vision in Lockheart's head of such success, that Phillip is sent into a promotion. Phillip and Sandy strike up a deal with Kirsten, the sassy advertising wonder, and the product is on its way to success. "Sucker and Blow", as the product is called, becomes a hazard, for it's purpose is to suck all the natural air in and blow special filtered air out. The business team falls into some intra-related trouble and Phillip is sent on a leave of absence.

Youssef El-Gingihy makes his debut as a

director with Burton Taylor Theatre's production of "Gasping." The lighting and blocking are essential to this performance, for the script only allows four main characters. El-Gingihy requires little onstage, suggesting the importance of the script rather than the props. The scene changes are swift and accompanied by music, which make the play seem more connected and smooth. Although the director accounts for a substantial amount of the process of transforming script into action, the characters play an equal role in bringing Ben Elton's vision to the stage.

The characters add the obvious satire into the performance, on top of the plot's exaggeration of corporate life. Nick Gill, who plays the role of Phillip, is presented as a go-getter schmoozer type who slicks his hair back and likes to speak rapidly. His appearance makes one think of the stereotyped car salesman, a man who attempts to dress to impress, but falls short and is always eager to "strike up a deal." Gill's interpretation of Phillip animated the character perfectly. He effectively sent the message to the audience as to the archetypal character that Phillip was supposed to represent.

Sophie Hunter, who was cast in the role of Kirsten, presented the perfect independent-businesswoman-with-sex-appeal type that everyone just loves to hate. Her skillfully placed apparel made her character seem to know how to play the business game, and she did it quite well. Hunter's dramatic interpretation of the character fitted the satirical theme brilliantly; her sassy intonation and movement made Kirsten one of the audience's favorite characters.

"Gasping" is not a slapstick-type humour performance that sends audience members into fits of hysteria. Instead, the subtle references and wittiness of the script create more of a sarcastic atmosphere, allowing the audience to sit back and laugh at the obsession with money. Audiences will find this performance entertaining, as well as an invitation to reflect on the importance of business ethics.

Rachael Liberman 20/11/01

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EXHIBITIONS

Thursday 22nd November

VENETIAN RENAISSANCE DRAWINGS / Important drawings from Christ Church's old master collection / Christ Church Picture Gallery  
GENERAL TOUR / Guided tour around the gallery (£2, Cons available) / 2.15pm / Christ Church Picture Gallery / Tel: 276172

GIGS + NIGHTLIFE

Thursday 22nd November  
ACOUSTIC OPEN SESSION / Free / Bring an instrument and join in / 8.30pm - midnight / Cricketers Arms, 43, Ilfley Rd / Tel: 726264  
LOS HOMBRES / Latin guitars / 11pm-2am / Freud's, Walton Street / Tel: 311177  
NEW NOAKES QUARTET / Pete Oxley's lyrical groove outfit (E6, £3 conc) / 9pm / The Spin@The Wheatsheaf, Wheatsheaf Alley, 129 High Street / Tel: 243276  
PLAYGROUND! / UK Garage Anthems club night with djs Nathan Gould and Jack Vullins. £3 / 10.00pm-2.00am / Backroom @ The Bully, 162 Cowley Road / Tel: 244516  
SPUNGE / With Whitmore and Farse / Doors 7.30pm / The Zodiac, 190 Cowley Road; Tel: 42004